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In response to the Office Action mailed April 7, 2000, the Examiner is respectfully requested to consider and enter the following amendments:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1, 3, and 13 without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter.

REMARKS

There are now pending in this application Claims 4 and 6-13 with Claims 4, 9 and 12 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 3, and 13 have been cancelled without prejudice or waiver of their subject matter.

In the Official Action dated April 7, 2000, Claims 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,409,549 (Mori) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,470,657 (Hayami). In view of the cancellation of Claims 1 and 3, this rejection is deemed moot.

Claims 4-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,589,006 (Itoyama, et al.) in view of Hayami. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the

rejections are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

With respect to Claim 4, the present invention relates to a cladding assembly comprising a plurality of building materials each of which comprise a substrate and a solar cell unit fixed to the substrate on a backing material by a fixing member. The cladding assembly also comprises electrical conductive leads arranged between the building materials and the backing material to contact the backing material, for leading output from the solar cell units to the outside. The jacket material of each of the electrical conductive leads is composed of at least one selected from the group consisting of polyethylene resins, polyamide resins, vinylidene fluoride resins, chloroprene rubber, ethylene-propylene rubber, silicone resins, and flouroresins. The backing material contains any one of asphalt resins, vinyl chloride resins, polystyrene resins and polyurethane resins. The substrate is composed of at least one selected from the group consisting of metals, resins, and glass.

Claims 9 relates to a method of installing a building material and corresponds generally to independent Claim 4.

With respect to Claim 12, the present invention relates to an air flowing apparatus comprising a building material which comprises a substrate and a solar cell unit fixed to the substrate and which is fixed to a backing material with a

space therebetween so that the outside air flows in the space, passes through the space and is entrapped in a house or discharged to the outdoors. The air flowing apparatus also comprises an electrical conductive lead arranged between the building material and the backing material to contact the backing material, for leading output from the solar cell unit to the outside. A jacket material of the electrical conductive lead is composed of at least one selected from the group consisting of polyethylene resins, polyamide resins, vinylidene fluoride resins, chloroprene rubber, ethylene propylene rubber, silicone resins, and flouroresins. The backing material contains any one of asphalt resins, vinyl chloride resins, polystyrene resins and polyurethane resins. The substrate is composed of at least one selected from the group consisting of metals, resins, and glass.

The Itoyama, et al. patent , relates to a solar cell module and a passive solar heating system using the solar cell module. However, Itoyama, et al. fails to disclose or suggest a cladding assembly comprising, inter alia, building materials with solar cells which contact a backing material, which contains any one of asphalt resins, vinyl chloride resins, polyester resins, and polyurethane resins; and an electrical conductive lead arranged between the building materials and the backing material, as disclosed and claimed in the present invention.

The Hayami patent teaches a heat resistant high voltage insulated lead wire for direct current with an insulating coating over the conductor that is formed by a polyolethen resin composition. However, Hayami fails to disclose or suggest a cladding assembly comprising, inter alia, building materials with solar cells which contact a backing material, which contains any one of asphalt resins, vinyl chloride resins, polyester resins, and polyurethane resins; and an electrical conductive lead arranged between the building materials and the backing material.

Accordingly, without conceding the propriety of combining Itoyama, et al. with Hayami, it is submitted that such a combination still fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

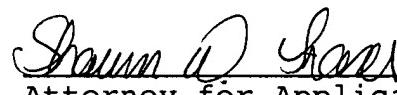
For the above reasons, Applicants submit that independent Claims 4, 9 and 12 are allowable over the cited art. The dependent claims depend from the independent claims and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recite additional features in combination with the features of their respective independent claims and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicants request that the present Amendment After Final Rejection be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Applicants submit that the present amendments reduce the number of issues for consideration and place the claims in condition for allowance. Applicants believe the present amendments were necessitated by the Examiner's comments in the Official Action and were not previously presented because Applicants believed the prior claims were allowable.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action and submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and early passage to issue of the present application earnestly are solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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